

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS REPORT

Livestock Slaughter
Average Prices Received by Farmers
U.S. Farm Labor & Wage Rates

Louisiana Livestock Slaughter

Commercial red meat production in Louisiana during April totaled 1.3 million pounds, unchanged from March but 30 percent above the previous year.

There were 1,200 head of **cattle** slaughtered during April, down 200 head from March but 100 head above the previous year. Average live weight was 944 pounds, up 45 pounds from the previous month and 96 pounds above April 2004. Total live weight, at 1.11 million pounds, was 10 percent below the previous month but 18 percent above the previous year.

Calves slaughtered during April totaled 500 head, up 100 head from March and the same as the previous year. Live weight averaged 502 pounds, unchanged from March but 3 pounds above April 2004. Total live weight, at 234,000 pounds, was up 32 percent from March but 7 percent below the previous year.

The number of **hogs** slaughtered during April totaled 1,300 head, down 1,100 head from the previous month and 400 head below the previous year. Average live weight was 196 pounds, down 10 pounds from March and 3 pounds below the previous year. Total live weight was 264,000 pounds, 47 percent below March and 21 percent below a year ago.

The number of **sheep** slaughtered during April was 100 head, down 100 head from March but unchanged from the previous year. Live weight averaged 87 pounds, down 16 pounds from the previous month but 7 pounds above the previous year.

United States Livestock Slaughter

Commercial red meat production for the United States totaled 3.62 billion pounds in April, down 2 percent from the 3.71 billion pounds produced in April 2004.

April 2005 contained 21 weekdays (including no holidays) and 5 Saturdays. April 2004 contained 22 weekdays (including no holidays) and 4 Saturdays.

Beef production, at 1.89 billion pounds, was 3 percent below the previous year. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.56 million head, down 5 percent from April 2004. The average live weight was up 20 pounds from the previous year, at 1,220 pounds.

Veal production totaled 13.0 million pounds, 7 percent below April a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 61,600 head, down 13 percent from April 2004. The average live weight was 23 pounds above last year, at 353 pounds.

Pork production totaled 1.70 billion pounds, down 1 percent from the previous year. Hog kill totaled 8.44 million head, 2 percent below April 2004. The average live weight was 3 pounds above the previous year, at 271 pounds.

Lamb and mutton production, at 15.5 million pounds, was down 11 percent from April 2004. Sheep slaughter totaled 220,800 head, 14 percent below last year. The average live weight was 141 pounds, up 5 pounds from April a year ago.

January to April 2005 commercial red meat production was 14.6 billion pounds, down 1 percent from 2004. Accumulated beef production was down 2 percent from last year; veal was down 12 percent; pork was down slightly from last year; and lamb and mutton production was down 8 percent.

Commercial Livestock Slaughter and Red Meat Production

Item	Louisiana					United States			
	March	April		January - April		April		January - April	
	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005
-----Number, thousand head-----									
Cattle	1.4	1.1	1.2	4.8	4.8	2,697.7	2,560.1	10,574.8	10,152.5
Calves	0.4	0.5	0.5	2.2	2.0	70.7	61.6	297.7	259.1
Hogs	2.4	1.7	1.3	8.2	7.4	8,653.2	8,443.8	34,370.0	33,972.9
Sheep & Lambs	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.7	0.7	256.2	220.8	995.7	924.6
-----Total live weight, thousand pounds-----									
Cattle	1,239	937	1,109	4,229	4,289	323,188	3,122,560	12,941,774	12,620,193
Calves	177	252	234	1,122	961	23,318	21,703	97,381	86,555
Hogs	495	334	264	1,750	1,504	2,317,191	2,285,987	9,214,184	9,184,525
Sheep & Lambs	21	8	10	75	76	34,836	31,077	139,480	128,811
-----Average live weight, pounds-----									
Cattle	899	848	944	881	894	1,200	1,220	1,224	1,243
Calves	502	499	502	510	481	330	353	327	334
Hogs	206	199	196	213	203	268	271	268	270
Sheep & Lambs	103	80	87	107	109	136	141	140	139
-----Million pounds-----									
Red Meat	1.3	1.0	1.3	4.7	4.7	3,712.8	3,622.3	14,776.6	14,571.1

May Farm Prices Received Index Unchanged From Last Month

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in May, at 122, based on 1990-92=100, was unchanged from April. The Crop and Livestock Indexes were unchanged. Producers received higher commodity prices for hogs, strawberries, hay and potatoes. Lower prices were received for lettuce, broccoli, asparagus and dairy. The overall index was also affected by the 3-year average seasonal change in the mix of commodities producers sell. Increased average marketings of cantaloupe, sweet corn, grapes and broilers offset decreased marketings of cattle, dairy, calves and asparagus.

Preliminary All Farm Products Index is down 7 points from May 2004. The Food Commodities Index, at 126, is unchanged from last month but 5 points below May 2004.

Prices Paid Index Unchanged

The May Index of Prices Paid for Commodities and Services, Interest, Taxes and Farm Wage Rates is 139 percent of the 1990-92 average. The index is unchanged from April but 4 points above May 2004. Lower prices in May for feeder pigs, diesel fuel, feed grains and gasoline offset higher prices for hay and forages, nitrogen fertilizers, complete feeds and feeder cattle.

Average Prices Received by Farmers: Louisiana and United States

Item	Louisiana			United States		
	Entire Month		Preliminary	Entire Month		Preliminary
	May 2004	April 2005	May 2005 ¹	May 2004	April 2005	May 2005 ¹
	-----Dollars-----			-----Dollars-----		
Soybeans, per bushel	2/	6.11	2/	9.56	6.03	6.09
Rice, per cwt	9.51	7.29	7.21	8.82	7.06	7.00
Upland cotton, per pound ³	.603	.402	.402	.597	.431	.422
Hay, all, baled, per ton	n/a	n/a	n/a	101.00	96.90	107.00
Beef Cattle, per cwt ⁴	64.10	70.00	73.10	88.50	94.00	92.90
Steers & Heifers, per cwt	97.70	109.00	111.00	92.60	98.30	96.90
Cows, per cwt ⁵	49.00	54.00	56.00	52.50	57.10	58.70
Calves, per cwt	112.00	131.00	131.00	121.00	140.00	141.00
Broilers, live, per pound	n/a	n/a	n/a	.500	.440	.440
Eggs, all, per dozen	n/a	n/a	n/a	.645	.469	.452
Milk, all, per cwt ⁶	n/a	n/a	n/a	19.30	15.20	14.90

¹ Mid-month.

² Price not published to avoid disclosure of individual farms.

³ Preliminary prices are based on sales during the first half of the month.

⁴ "Cows" and "steers and heifers" combined.

⁵ Beef cows and cull dairy cows sold for slaughter.

⁶ Before deductions for hauling and government withholdings. Includes bulk tank, quantity, and other premiums. Excludes hauling subsidies.

n/a = not available

United States Farm Labor

There were 978,000 hired workers on the nation's farms and ranches during the week of April 10-16, 2005, down 10 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 746,000 were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 232,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$9.34 per hour during the April 2005 reference week, up 11 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$8.55 per hour, up eight cents from last April, while livestock workers earned \$9.23 per hour compared with \$8.95 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$8.73 per hour, was up 14 cents from last year.

Farm Labor & Wage Rates: Delta and United States

Item	Delta ¹			United States		
	April 2004	January 2005	April 2005	April 2004	January ² 2005	April 2005
	-----Thousand Workers-----			-----Thousand Workers-----		
Hired Workers (All)	25	18	28	1084	774	978
Ag Service Workers	---	---	---	257	185	232
Hired Farm Workers	25	18	28	827	589	746
150 Days or More	19	16	24	651	494	596
149 Days or Less	6	2	4	176	95	150
	-----Per Week-----			-----Per Week-----		
Average Hours Worked						
(Hired Farm Workers)	39.8	30.7	39.4	40.6	37.0	39.8
	-----Per Hour-----			-----Per Hour-----		
Average Wage Rate						
(Hired Farm Workers)	\$7.86	\$9.29	\$7.64	\$9.23	\$9.78	\$9.34
By Type of Worker						
Field	\$7.75	\$9.52	\$7.37	\$8.47	\$8.71	\$8.55
Livestock	\$7.47	\$7.63	\$7.18	\$8.95	\$9.20	\$9.23

¹Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi.

²Revised.

---Data not published.

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